

USS Constitution Museum

Archives Small Collections

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Size: 4 Manuscript Boxes

Accession Numbers: #167.2 – #2012

Acquisition: The Archives “Collections” Collection consists of documents that were donated to the Museum when it was first established, and also includes more recently acquired collections.

Access: Unrestricted

Scope and Content: The Archives “Collections” Collection is composed of small distinct collections that contain information about *USS Constitution's* captains and crew, as well as documents that were created by these individuals and their families. The information in each collection varies, and is also related to *Constitution* restoration and maintenance projects, and funding programs. The documents range in date from 1803-1983. The collections are arranged according to accession number, and most documents are ordered chronologically.

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Series XXV. Documents related to the 1950-1953 Restoration of USS *Constitution*

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Series XXVIII. Charles Ackers National Cruise Collection

Series XXIX. Edward Potter Collection

Descriptions

- Series I. Eugene C. Ramsdell Collection Vol. 1 (4 folders)
Accession# 167.2 – 167.5

This collection consists of correspondence from Eugene Ramsdell of the Ramsdell Music Company (April; September 1904), and one musical score composed by Ernest Harry Adams entitled, “March for Piano”.

- Series II. Joseph E. A. Morin Collection Vol. 1 (7 folders)
Accession# 210.1 – 210.7

This collection contains signatures of officers and crew during the 1931-1934 National Cruise, and signatures of crew members from the 1800s who visited the ship in New Bedford, MA. Also included are newspaper clippings, a “Money List, Rate, and Name” form, and one photograph with signatures of Captain Louis J. Gulliver and crew on the reverse.

- Series III. Alexander Munro Cutler Collection Vol. 1 (1 folder)
Accession# 230.3 – 5; 230.10

The collection includes one business card and correspondence between Alexander Munro Cutler, who produced sails for the *Constitution* in the early 1930s, and officials at the Boston Navy Yard. It also includes one letter from Louis J. Gulliver to Munro’s daughter, and one photograph of the shop where the sails were made.

- Series IV. Old Ironsides Association Vol. 1 (5 folders)
Accession# 691.2 – 691.53C

This collection contains correspondence between J.W. Pickering, Corresponding Secretary of the Old Ironsides Association, and others such as Calvin Coolidge and Henry Cabot Lodge (1916). The collection also includes a letter to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Secretary of the Navy, concerning funding for the Association, various letters requesting souvenirs from *Constitution*, a copy of the ship’s inspection report (1919), information about inaccurate reports by a local newspaper, and two photographs of sections of the *Constitution*.

- Series V. Joseph E. A. Morin National Cruise Collection Vol. 1 (4 folders)
Accession# 735, #736

This collection contains photographs of Joseph E. A. “Doggie” Morin and crew, in addition to other photographs taken during the National Cruise (1932; 1934). It also contains a National Cruise map, correspondence (1933; 1945), one notebook listing ports visited, the number of visitors, and the names of crew members, etc.

- Series VI. USS *Constitution* Restoration, 1927-1931 Vol. 1 (3 folders)
Accession# 740.6 a – 740.6 b

The collection includes a history of the *Constitution* and her captains, as well as information about the *President, United States, Congress, Chesapeake, and Adams*. It also contains information about rigging and “Riggers, Helpers, and Laborers who worked on U.S. Frigate *Constitution*”, repairs, sails, dry-docking and undocking methods (1936), sketches, and painting. This collection ranges in date from 1927-1958.

- Series VII. Benjamin Stevens Papers Vol. 1 (1 folder)
Accession# 747.1 – 3, 747.4

This collection contains one photograph of Stevens, Captain’s Clerk onboard *Constitution* during the 1840s, one postcard, and correspondence regarding Stevens’ 80th and 81st birthdays (1904; 1905).

- Series VIII. USS *Constitution* Funding and Ship-related Documents Vol. 1 (4 folders)
Accession# 749.1a – 749.1j

The collection consists of various documents concerning the Boston Redevelopment Authority and relocating the *Constitution* (1968-1970). It contains correspondence about Grace E. Schwerin, Chairwoman of the Campaign to “Save ‘Old Ironsides’” (1965; 1975), as well as information about Sharon Anne Weber, an honorary member of *Constitution’s* crew. Additional information concerns replicated colonial flags (1971), cover letters for photographs (1970-1976), fundraising efforts and results (1936; 1969, 1970), the *Constitution* museum (1969, 1970), ship refurbishment, and one magazine article.

- Series IX. Inventory and Appraisal of Possessions Vol. 2 (4 folders)
for Isaac Hull, Correspondence, Re: Donation
of possessions to State Department
Accession# 802.1 – 802.4

This collection consists of a document listing Commodore Isaac Hull’s personal belongings and their approximate values. It also contains correspondence between Ann McCurdy Hart Hull, Isaac Hull’s wife, and William H. Seward regarding donating the Commodore’s possessions to the State Department.

- Series X. Ann McCurdy Hart Hull Collection Vol. 2 (14 folders)
Accession# 823.2 – 823.15

This collection includes receipts for medical care, and Commodore Isaac Hull’s burial. There are also receipts for a monument at Laurel Hill Cemetery, and other receipts written amongst service providers.

Series XI. A.P. Wetherill Papers Vol. 2 (2 folders)
Accession# 1346.3 a, b – 1356.5

This collection contains correspondence (1916-1917; 1940; 1983) regarding the location of an Andrew Jackson figurehead that was removed from the *Constitution*. It also includes a narrative of how the figurehead may have been seized.

Series XII. Charles F. Adams and Edward E. Hale Vol. 2 (1 folder)
Correspondence
Accession# 1388.2 a, b – 1388.3

This collection contains two letters (1904) regarding positions, funding, and preserving the *Constitution*.

Series XIII. Chester C. Wage Collection Vol. 2 (1 folder)
Accession# 1413.1 – 4

This collection consists of documents created onboard *Constitution* during the years 1835-1838, and includes a small book containing information on ship “departures, port arrivals, and distances traveled”.

Series XIV. Didier Rouchas Papers Vol. 2 (4 folders)
Accession# 1461

This collection consists of documents that outline the life and military career of Midshipman Didier Rouchas (1805-1809; 1811-1812; 1832). These documents include leave approvals and orders, which place the *Constitution* at the following locations: New York, Boston, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg. The collection also includes a marriage license, and family history.

Series XV. Harry Moore Collection Vol. 2 (1 folder)
Accession# 1484.3

This collection contains one envelope with an imprint of the *Constitution*.

Series XVI. Correspondence and newspaper clippings, Vol. 2 (4 folders)
Re: Journal by William Fleming
(Marine onboard *Constitution* 1820s).
Accession# 1568

This collection contains correspondence between William B. Fleming, grandson of William Fleming (Marine onboard *Constitution* 1824-1828), and others regarding the publication of William Fleming’s journal. It also includes newspaper clippings regarding Fleming family members, ownership of the journal, and the journal’s content.

- Series XVII. Edward Preble Letters Vol. 2 (1 folder)
Accession# 1583.1 – 1583.9

The collection contains correspondence between Edward Preble (*Constitution*, 1802 -1804) and William Bainbridge (*Philadelphia*), U.S. officials, the Prime Minister of Tripoli, and the King of Sicily during the Barbary Wars. The letters provide information on the captured ship *Philadelphia*, negotiations and strategies (1803-1804).

- Series XVIII. Vice Admiral William McCrea Constitution Vol. 2 (1 folder)
Ball Memorabilia
Accession# 1705.1 – 8

This collection contains souvenirs from the “Constitution Ball” held on May 14, 1966.

- Series XIX. James Nicholson Collection Vol. 3 (2 folders)
Accession# 1784.1 a, b – 1784.9

This collection contains correspondence (1925-1926) regarding Order of the Elks (Maine) participation in the Save “Old Ironsides” Fund. It also includes copies of student essays, and the “B.P.O. Elks Save “Old Ironsides” Fund Campaign Results.”

- Series XX. Lieutenant Commander John Carson Papers Vol. 3 (1 folder)
Accession# 1859

The collection contains copies of Lieutenant Commander John Carson’s orders to and from *Constitution* (1931-1932), in addition to a memo concerning a change in the *Constitution’s* “watch” patterns, various photocopied images of the ship, and one copied photograph of “Rear Admiral John H. Carson.”

- Series XXI. A. H. Edwards Military Papers Vol. 3 (1 folder)
Accession# 1887

This collection contains information about A. H. Edwards’ assignment to the *Constitution* (1823-1824), as well as appointments, recommendations, and an account sheet.

- Series XXII. Master Shipjoiner/Joiner Shop Papers Vol. 3 (1 folder)
Accession# 1898

This collection consists of correspondence, receipts, lists, and sketches from the Master Shipjoiner and Construction Officer at Boston Navy Yard (1906-1907; 1912). All information is related to the condition of the ship, its contents, repairs, and costs.

Series XXIII. A.T. Gookin Letters Vol. 3 (1 folder)
Accession # 1909

This collection consists of five letters both written by A.T. Gookin and received by him. The contents of the letters refer to the 1927-1931 Restoration of USS *Constitution* and obtaining some of the discarded material to make items from. The letters span from 1927 to 1930.

Series XXIV Restoration and Inspection Vol. 3 (7 folders)
of USS *Constitution* Documents
Accession# 1930

This is a collection of memoranda, letters and photographs about the restoration and inspection of USS *Constitution* during the period April 4, 1949 through November 16, 1962. It also includes a tally of visitors to the ship from January 1, 1948 to July 31, 1949.

Series XXV. Documents related to the 1950-1952 Restoration Vol. 4 (1 folder)
Accession # 1934

This collection contains memos from the Commander of the Boston Naval Shipyard to the Chief of the Bureau of Ships. Some of the contents include recommendations concerning future action in connection with maintenance of USF *Constitution* and USF *Constellation*, request for funds for major repairs for USF *Constitution*, material condition and status of major repairs of USS *Constitution*. Also included is a copy of the Bill introduced to House of Representatives to provide for the restoration and maintenance of the United States Ship *Constitution* and to authorize the disposition of the USS *Constellation*, USS *Hartford*, USS *Olympia* and USS *Oregon*, and for other purposes.

Series XXVI. Documents related to Preservation of wood for Vol. 4 (3 folders)
USS *Constitution*
Accession # 1935

This collection contains two newspaper articles dated 06/01/1949 and 04/1950 about preservation of wood of USS *Constitution* and a collection of letters and memo's regarding the preservation of *Constitution* wood, and the use of tar on the rigging.

Series XXVII. Letter of the Commandant of the First Naval District Vol. 4 (2 folder)
Accession # 1937

Collection of typed letters and carbon copies from the Office of the Commandant of the First Naval District, Boston, MA from the years 1962 to 1975 on various topics relating to USS *Constitution*. Three type script copies: Press release 1976 (?) "USS *Constitution* Cannon Fire Again" 2 pages, "The Story of USS *Constitution*" issued by the Navy Department; History of the Commandant's House on Charlestown Navy Yard.

Series XXVIII. Charles Ackers National Cruise Collection
Accession # 1962

Vol. 4 (1 Folder)

This collection contains four items. The first is an invitation to a St. Patrick's Day frolic to be held on March 10, 1934 and hosted by Thomas J. Crowley and his daughter. The invitation is written in Gaelic. An English translation is attached. The second item is a library card for The Public Library of the City of Boston. It was issued to William Gagnon. The reverse side is inscribed, "This card traveled twenty-three thousand miles aboard the U.S.F Constitution. C. Ackers, Cox." There are also two photographs depicting Ackers aboard USS *Constitution*.

Series XXIX. Edward Potter Collection
Accession # 2012

Vol. 4 (1 folder)

Series of ten letters mostly written by Edward Potter to his sister Adeline dating from 1839 to 1854. Three were written on board USS *Constitution* in 1853 and 1854. USS *Constitution* served as flagship of the African squadron. Three were written while Potter was a Midshipman at the Naval Academy. Two of the letters were written by Potter's father to his son.